

**LEGISLATIVE SERVICES AGENCY  
OFFICE OF FISCAL AND MANAGEMENT ANALYSIS**

200 W. Washington, Suite 301  
Indianapolis, IN 46204  
(317) 233-0696  
<http://www.in.gov/legislative>

**FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

**LS 7098**

**BILL NUMBER:** SB 321

**NOTE PREPARED:** Jan 5, 2007

**BILL AMENDED:**

**SUBJECT:** Child Molestation.

**FIRST AUTHOR:** Sen. Miller

**FIRST SPONSOR:**

**BILL STATUS:** As Introduced

**FUNDS AFFECTED:** ☒ **GENERAL**  
☒ **DEDICATED**  
☐ **FEDERAL**

**IMPACT:** State & Local

**Summary of Legislation:** This bill requires certain persons who interview children under the age of 16 concerning suspected abuse or neglect to complete a forensic child interview program.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2007.

**Explanation of State Expenditures:** This bill requires a caseworker or other employee of the Department of Child Services (DCS), law enforcement officer, deputy prosecuting attorney, or investigator employed by a prosecuting attorney to complete a forensic child interview program that trains participants in age-appropriate interview techniques prior to interviewing a child less than 16 years of age concerning suspected abuse or neglect.

*Department of Child Services:* The DCS reports that family case managers and supervisors would be the only individuals interviewing children regarding suspected child abuse or neglect. In addition, completing a forensic child interview training program is not a part of mandatory training for these employees. However, if counties identify a specific training need and funding is available, the DCS can approve funding for the training. The DCS does not track the number of counties or individuals which have received forensic child interview training. Training is paid by the DCS.

As of September 30, 2006, there were 1,045 family case managers and 185 supervisor positions in the state. However, it should be noted that DCS is currently in the process of hiring approximately 550 additional family case managers and supervisors. The number of current employees who have completed a forensic child interview training are unknown. The type of training program used and the persons identified to complete the training would depend on administrative action. As proposed, the state would experience an

increase in expenditures. Actual expenditures will depend on the number of employees needing training and the cost of the training program.

*Law Enforcement Officers:* Both the Indiana State Police (ISP) and Law Enforcement Training Board report that a forensic child interview program is not a part of basic or in-service training. The Board, however, does report that a select few local law enforcement officers have elected to complete an in-service forensic child interview course. The number of local law enforcement officers who have done so is not known. The ISP reports that ISP basic training is housed at the Plainfield Law Enforcement Training Academy; instructors are provided by the ISP themselves. Furthermore, there is not a great deal of cost associated with basic training for the ISP. It is not known if the ISP employ an individual who would be able to conduct a forensic child interview training program. The Board reports that basic training for local law enforcement officers is paid from the state General Fund. In addition, in-service training for both the ISP and local law enforcement officers is paid from dedicated dollars received from a \$3 fee collected by clerks from each action in which a defendant is found to have committed a crime, violated a statute defining an infraction, or violated an ordinance of a municipal corporation.

The Board reports that there are approximately 15,600 ISP and local law enforcement officers in the state. This figure includes state, county, city, university, airport, school, railroad, and other law enforcement officers. In addition, the figures include approximately 3,300 part-time or reserve employees. It is assumed that a portion of these persons would not require the training (for example, railroad officers). The number of ISP and local law enforcement officers who have completed a forensic child interview program is unknown. The type of training program used and the persons identified to complete the training will depend on administrative action. As proposed, the state would experience an increase in expenditures. Actual expenditures will depend on the number of ISP and local law enforcement officers requiring training and the cost of the training program.

#### **Explanation of State Revenues:**

**Explanation of Local Expenditures:** *Prosecuting Attorneys:* The Prosecuting Attorneys Council (PAC) reports that deputy prosecutors and prosecutors would only be involved in speaking to children for purposes of preparing them for trials or depositions. This occurs after an initial statement is taken from a child. The term "interviews" is not defined under the bill; thus, whether or not deputy prosecutors and prosecutors would be required to complete the training is not known. The PAC also reports that there are some counties who have designated certain deputy prosecutors to handle child abuse cases. Furthermore, many of those deputy prosecutors have attended Finding Words Indiana (see *Background Information*), a forensic child interview program. Training (continuing education units) for deputy prosecutors and prosecutors is paid by each individual prosecuting attorney's office.

The PAC reports that there are currently 215 prosecutors and deputy prosecutors in Indiana. The number of investigators employed by prosecuting attorney offices is not known; however, the PAC reports that it is not likely that an investigator would interview a child pertaining to suspected child abuse or neglect.

The number of prosecutors and deputy prosecutors who have completed a forensic child interview program are unknown. The type of training program used and the persons identified to complete the training would depend on administrative action. As proposed, counties would experience an increase in expenditures. Actual expenditures will depend on the number of deputy prosecutors and prosecutors requiring training and the cost of the training program.

*Background Information:* An example of a forensic child interview training program which some deputy prosecutors and prosecutors have completed is *Finding Words Indiana*. *Finding Words Indiana* is a course offered by the Indiana Child Advocacy Centers Coalition. The course lasts for five days in which students learn the necessary skills to conduct a competent, investigative interview of a child abuse victim. The cost for the program is \$395.

See also *Explanation of State Expenditures* regarding law enforcement officers.

**Explanation of Local Revenues:**

**State Agencies Affected:** Department of Child Services; Indiana State Police.

**Local Agencies Affected:** Local law enforcement agencies; Prosecuting Attorneys.

**Information Sources:** <http://www.chauciesplace.org/fwi.html>; John Ryan, Department of Child Services; MB Lippold, Department of Child Services; Stephanie Beasley, Department of Child Services; Steve Johnson, Indiana Prosecuting Attorney's Council; Suzanne O'Malley, Indiana Prosecuting Attorney's Council; Valerie Brooks, Supreme Court; Sherry Beck, Indiana State Police; Perry Hollowell, Indiana Law Enforcement Training Board; Marcela Lister, Indiana Law Enforcement Training Board; Yonda Snyder, Department of Child Services; ChauciesPlace.

**Fiscal Analyst:** Sarah Brooks, 317-232-9559.